



The Situation and the Story: The Art of Personal Narrative

By Vivian Gornick

Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 184 pages. Dimensions: 7.8in. x 5.2in. x 0.6in. A guide to the art of personal writing, by the author of *Fierce Attachments* and *The End of the Novel*. All narrative writing must pull from the raw material of life a tale that will shape experience, transform event, deliver a bit of wisdom. In a story or a novel the I who tells this tale can be, and often is, an unreliable narrator but in nonfiction the reader must always be persuaded that the narrator is speaking truth. How does one pull from one's own boring, agitated self the truth-speaker who will tell the story a personal narrative needs to tell? That is the question *The Situation and the Story* asks--and answers. Taking us on a reading tour of some of the best memoirs and essays of the past hundred years, Gornick traces the changing idea of self that has dominated the century, and demonstrates the enduring truth-speaker to be found in the work of writers as diverse as Edmund Gosse, Joan Didion, Oscar Wilde, James Baldwin, or Marguerite Duras. This book, which grew out of fifteen years teaching in MFA programs,...



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